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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
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Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

Summary

The present report is prepared annually to comply with General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, as well as with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board decisions 1995/5 and 2009/2. The report provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to work closely with other members of the United Nations system to ensure sustainable results for children.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the report and transmit it, together with the comments made by the delegations at the present session, to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2010.

* E/2010/100 (to be issued).
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I. Introduction

1. The present report is prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. It follows previous reports[1] to the Economic and Social Council and may be read in conjunction with the annual reports to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Those reports provide an analysis of programme achievements against the key results areas of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Together with the data companion to the annual report, the reports document statistical evidence on programme results, cross-sectoral strategies and key performance indicators on management and operations.

2. The present report is also prepared in response to UNICEF Executive Board decision 2009/2, which requested UNICEF to (a) include in future reports to the Economic and Social Council a more qualitative assessment and analysis of results achieved, progress made and difficulties encountered, as well as lessons learned; (b) take into account General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review; and (c) include recommendations to further improve its implementation. A similar decision (2009/3) was adopted by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The present report also reflects consultations among UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF and places particular focus on issues emphasized in Assembly resolution 62/208, including capacity development, South-South cooperation and gender mainstreaming.

II. Funding for operational activities of the United Nations development system

3. The global economic slowdown has put pressure on overall development assistance budgets and at the same time has prioritized the need to maintain or enhance investment levels for critical programmes for children's survival, growth and development. Diversifying the donor base and increasing income from emerging donors remain priorities for UNICEF. As part of its resource mobilization strategy, UNICEF is investing more efforts in strategic partnerships with emerging donors, global public-private partnership programmes, the Bretton Woods institutions and the private sector. UNICEF is also working to leverage resources from others for investment in children.

4. Although UNICEF recorded a growth of 13 per cent in its annual income, from $3,013 million in 2007 to $3,390 million in 2008, this positive trend will not likely be maintained in 2009. Recent trends from some key donors to UNICEF indicate a drop in their core and non-core contributions in 2009.

5. As at 1 November 2009,[2] UNICEF had recorded core regular resources income of $584 million from Government donors.

[1] E/ICEF/2009/3, E/ICEF/2008/3 and E/ICEF/2007/3.

[2] Unless otherwise specified, all income figures in the present section were recorded as at 1 November 2009.

Income from Government sources

(Millions of United States dollars)

Income type	*2007*[a]	*2008*[a]	*2009 (1 November)*
Core/regular resources	538	616	584
Non-core/other resources — regular	905	966	628
Non-core/other resources — emergency	292	458	305
Total	**1 735**	**2 040**	**1 517**

[a] Annual figures compiled at the end of the financial year (January to December).

6. Total core/regular resources income for 2009 from all sources, including the private sector, is projected to be $957 million. The current ratio of regular resources to total resources received stands at 26 per cent[3] as at 1 November 2009, highlighting a need to correct the growing imbalance between core resources and non-core/other resources income.

7. Contributions to non-core/other resources recorded from Governments as at 1 November 2009 were $933 million, against a projection of $1,210 million. Of this amount, $628 million went to regular non-core resources, against a financial plan of $880 million, while $305 million went to emergency non-core resources, against a financial plan of $330 million. As at 1 November 2009, total non-core/other resources income from all sources, including the private sector, was $1,697 million, or 86 per cent of the planned target of $1,967 million for 2009.

8. For 2009, UNICEF recorded a total income of $517 million for emergencies from all sources. UNICEF humanitarian response during the year covered 55 emergencies, including those involving 15 consolidated appeal processes, with a 41 per cent funding level, as well as 5 flash appeals, with a 26 per cent funding level. The single largest humanitarian funding source was the Central Emergency Response Fund, which provided $69.5 million. The other major humanitarian funding sources included the United States of America ($73 million), Japan ($57 million) and the European Commission ($63 million).

9. UNICEF received $173 million in thematic funds for 2009, which accounted for 11 per cent of non-core/other resources. By comparison, in 2008 UNICEF received $343 million in thematic funding for the five medium-term strategic plan focus areas and humanitarian response. This amount, representing 15 per cent of non-core/other resources, allowed UNICEF to reach the medium-term strategic plan target for thematic funding, although the funding varied widely among the focus areas.

10. UNICEF also recorded $180 million in funding from inter-organizational sources such as the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Development Operations Coordination Office, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and the World Bank, among others. Multi-donor trust funds and pooled resources were a large part of these funding arrangements, which were directed primarily to humanitarian responses and post-

[3] This does not include regular resources from private sector sources, which are recorded at the end of the year.

crisis recovery. At the beginning of November 2009, funding through multi-donor pooled funds totalled $67.5 million. Funding from the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund thematic window expanded, with significant country-level allocations, such as those for Angola ($1.7 million) and Mauritania ($1.3 million).

11. Private sector funding constitutes a significant part of UNICEF income. The strengthening and broadening of private sector partnerships remain high priorities for UNICEF in order to mobilize resources for the protection and development of children. Private sector contributions from January to October 2009, including from national committees for UNICEF, global funds and foundations and private sector fundraising in programme countries, amounted to $426 million, or 19 per cent of total income.[3]

A. Partnerships and collaborative relationships, including cooperation with the World Bank

12. The UNICEF Executive Board, during its annual session in June 2009, endorsed a strategic framework for partnerships and collaborative relationships (E/ICEF/2009/10), which lays the ground for a more selective and coordinated approach to the organization's work with others. The strategic framework, which was based on surveys, studies and reports, most of them undertaken in 2008, describes how partnerships and collaborative relationships add value to the fulfilment of the UNICEF mission and strategic priorities and establishes guiding principles for all partnership engagements. The framework is complemented by a mapping document (E/ICEF/2009/11 and Corr.1), which provides details on different groups of partners and partnerships.

13. A key finding of the research was that UNICEF often made decisions about engaging in partnerships in an ad hoc manner, despite having worked with a broad range of partners throughout its history to achieve the best possible results for children. A key component of the framework's agenda for action is the development of new tools to assess both the potential and the risks involved in engaging with partners.

14. UNICEF is a formal member of 77 global programme partnerships as at mid-2009. UNICEF plays a governance role in 42 of these partnerships, and in 5 either hosts the partnership secretariat or provides secretariat/coordination services. More than 40 of the global programme partnerships in which UNICEF participates are related to the medium-term strategic plan focus area 1, young child survival and development. The principals of UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the health leaders from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank have agreed upon a common statement on improving global health metrics, data and information. UNICEF, along with WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), is advocating for greater visibility and investment in nutrition through engagement in a number of strategic partnerships.

15. In 2009, UNICEF completed an assessment of its engagement in a number of global programme partnerships, with the aim of developing guidelines to make this type of engagement more strategic and more easily evaluated. The assessment

indicated that these partnerships need to support country ownership more systematically, align and harmonize the assistance they provide and establish mutual accountability frameworks.

16. Since the adoption of the 2008 United Nations-World Bank partnership framework for crisis and post-crisis situations and the fiduciary principles accord between the World Bank and United Nations organizations, including UNICEF, several consultations have taken place between the World Bank and senior management in UNICEF. The dialogue has focused on collaboration in crisis and post-crisis countries and on the impact of the economic downturn on vulnerable people. The President of the World Bank participated in the UNICEF global leadership meeting in spring 2009, and the Executive Director of UNICEF participated in several World Bank meetings, including the high-level event in November 2009 on scaling up nutrition. A UNICEF deputy executive director took part in the 2009 two-day annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group. On this occasion, UNICEF submitted a written statement to the Development Committee of the World Bank and IMF.

17. UNICEF and the World Bank collaborate extensively at the country level, varying the relationship according to circumstances. The collaboration ranges from engaging in sectoral financial programmes to joint analytical work. For example, the two institutions conducted a joint survey in Turkey of how families have been impacted by the economic downturn.

18. UNICEF is also engaged in policy dialogue with IMF focusing on how to support countries in strengthening social protection for the most vulnerable populations in times of economic and financial downturn.

19. In accordance with the strategic framework, UNICEF has also been taking a number of steps to strengthen its programmatic work with civil society organizations. Comprehensive research on the work of UNICEF with civil society in selected countries was initiated during the second half of 2009. The research focuses on the challenges and opportunities in engagement with civil society, including faith-based organizations, sports associations, international non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and national civil society organizations.

20. The United Nations and other partners increasingly recognize that the corporate sector has a significant role to play in development beyond contributing funds; through different forms of engagement, this sector can be a key ally in supporting national goals and helping to achieve better outcomes for children. UNICEF has begun a review of its engagement with the corporate sector, with a view to introducing procedures and mechanisms that will facilitate new non-monetary modes of collaboration.

III. Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness

A. Capacity development

21. UNICEF views capacity development as a process over time through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives, defined within norms of human rights and gender equality. In 2009, as a step towards strengthening guidance and practice in this area, UNICEF commissioned a desk review of its efforts in capacity development. Among key issues examined were the following: the ways in which UNICEF currently incorporates capacity development into its cooperation and supports national efforts to develop capacity; the extent, quality and consistency of the consideration of capacity development in policy and guidance; the ways in which UNICEF is linking capacity development with a human rights-based approach to cooperation and gender equality as the foundational strategies of the medium-term strategic plan; and the major areas of strength and weakness.

22. Preliminary results of the review suggest that capacity needs-assessment is not uniformly prioritized in all UNICEF-supported programmes and initiatives. In some cases, capacity needs-assessment is very strong and forms an integral part of capacity-development efforts as well as the planning and design of programme actions; in other cases, it is not approached systematically. Similarly, some initiatives place strong emphasis on ensuring stakeholder participation and promoting local ownership, while others do not. Generally, there is limited focus on human rights-based approaches, gender mainstreaming and the application of basic principles such as participation, accountability and paying attention to rights-holders.

23. In 2009, the strongest area of UNICEF contribution to capacity development in many countries was in building the capacity of national partners to access and use development knowledge and technology. Other core issues addressed were social inclusion and equity, access to information and public sector accountability.

24. In medium-term strategic plan focus area 1, young child survival and development, the capacity of national Governments to design effective policies in health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene education was strengthened with UNICEF support in a number of countries, including Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tajikistan and Viet Nam. In support of focus area 2, basic education and gender equality, UNICEF in China supported a study on discrimination against in-school youths who have HIV/AIDS, the findings of which helped to identify specific issues for capacity-building of major institutions. Support was also provided to the Governments of Bangladesh and Colombia to formulate strategies on early childhood development and the right to education for emergency response plans.

25. UNICEF capacity-development activities in HIV/AIDS prevention ranged from providing support to the formulation of national HIV strategic plans to building national capacity for addressing discrimination in public education. Efforts were also made to strengthen institutional capacities to address child protection issues in a wide range of countries. Examples include the incorporation of international child-rights standards into the Albanian legal system and building the

capacity of the judicial system of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to protect the rights of children.

26. In other examples, national capacity-development efforts in Rwanda were directed to supporting national data-collection systems and developing the monitoring and evaluation framework in support of a national strategy on orphans and children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. In the area of preventing violence against children, UNICEF supported capacity development of the Arab Human Rights Fund in Yemen and the "Social agenda for children" of the Government of Brazil. UNICEF also supported capacity-development activities to protect child rights in the drafting of the national Constitution in Ecuador and in the national human rights action plan in Ghana.

27. In focus area 5, policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights, nearly two thirds of UNICEF-supported programmes supported national capacity for situation analysis, development planning, monitoring and/or evaluation. Often this took the form of incorporating children's rights and social development perspectives into the drafting processes of poverty-reduction strategies or other national sectoral and subnational plans. In this area, UNICEF also supported national adaptation of DevInfo technology, the building of database and analytical capacities for information management and the monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other national goals. Governments were also assisted in data-collection efforts, including multiple-indicator cluster surveys, demographic and health surveys and sector-specific surveys at the national and subnational levels. In some countries, UNICEF supported the capacity of the national statistical office in drafting laws to improve data collection systems or in incorporating international standards into national statistical record-keeping.

28. In evaluation, UNICEF contributed to key initiatives for capacity development. For example, UNICEF helped Egypt and Morocco to form their first national evaluation associations and helped Kenya to revive a dormant one. UNICEF was also strongly involved in all regional association conferences. In cooperation with UNDP, UNFPA and other partners, UNICEF convened national statistics office chiefs in the Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States region to share good practices in evidence-based policy-making. Meanwhile, a partnership with South Asian academic institutions continued to strengthen capacity of government and civil society professionals in evaluation.

29. UNICEF also played a strong role in developing the United Nations Evaluation Group/United Nations System Staff College training course on "What a United Nations evaluator needs to know", an introductory course on evaluation, and in promoting adoption of the course in seven regions. The course was completed by 390 participants from 42 United Nations organizations and 34 partner institutions, including Government staff.

30. In addition, technical assistance was provided to enhance the capacity of sectoral ministries to manage the results of their development plans, to design evaluations and to use evaluation results effectively.

31. UNICEF also helps to strengthen the financial management capabilities of national partners through the implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers and support to national procurement systems.

32. Overall, and in line with the approach of the United Nations Development Group and the emphasis of the triennial comprehensive policy review, UNICEF is now aiming to take a much more systematic and consistent approach to supporting country capacities in key areas for children, including through planning, impact assessment, learning and sharing of lessons, and evaluation.

B. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities

33. Initiatives supported by UNICEF to promote South-South cooperation were guided by the triennial comprehensive policy review as well as by decisions on South-South cooperation by the Policy Committee of the United Nations Secretary-General. These initiatives urged United Nations organizations and partners to develop an action-oriented and collaborative framework to tackle the cross-border challenges of climate change, food insecurity and HIV/AIDS, to introduce specific policy measures to ensure more systematic mainstreaming of South-South cooperation across the United Nations system and to use intergovernmental events as a means for renewing commitments to South-South cooperation.

34. UNICEF efforts to promote South-South cooperation are aligned to national priorities for children as well as to the focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan and global goals. Overall, more than 100 South-South cooperation initiatives were supported by UNICEF during 2008 at the regional and country levels. These initiatives addressed a range of themes affecting children's rights, including child survival and development, nutrition, education and gender equity; HIV/AIDS and children; maternal health; violence against women; trafficking and abuse of children; judicial and legal reform; social policy; social budgeting; and social protection. South-South cooperation efforts were most prominent in the Latin America, East Asia and the Pacific and Central and Eastern Europe Commonwealth of Independent States regions.

35. UNICEF support encompassed varying forms of cooperation among developing countries, including the sharing of technologies, networking among researchers and policymakers, educational visits, participation in conferences and the development of joint approaches to regional and cross-border issues. These collaborative exchanges occurred at governmental, civil society, academic and other levels. Some initiatives were triangular, involving exchanges between developing countries supported by international financial institutions, multilateral organizations or donor partners.

36. At the interregional level, successful experiences in cash transfer and social protection initiatives in Latin America are being adopted in Southern Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. The experience of Ethiopia with social protection was shared at the meetings of the African ministers of social development and at the International Policy Conference on the African Child organized by the African Child Policy Forum. UNICEF also supported the transfer among regions of experience regarding reducing disparity in access to education. The School Fee Abolition Initiative, in which UNICEF collaborates with the World Bank and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, has supported efforts in 23 countries, facilitating the exchange of experience through intercountry visits as well as national engagement with the Education for All fast-track initiative.

37. Among the regional initiatives were collaborations on juvenile justice and child rights in the Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States region, where UNICEF and the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia hosted a regional workshop on juvenile justice reform involving judges and legal professionals from several countries. UNICEF also facilitated an exchange between the office of the child rights ombudsperson in the Russian Federation and officials from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

38. South-South cooperation has also been used to strong effect in the area of birth registration. Collaboration with the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Development Bank and Plan International has resulted in a commitment from 18 Latin American Governments to achieve universal birth registration by 2015, in particular for indigenous and Afro-descendent children, and has spurred significant country-level initiatives on research, public awareness and collaboration.

39. To promote building the evidence base and capacity-building for social policy, social protection and poverty mitigation, technical exchanges took place between Government officials responsible for monitoring social and economic data using DevInfo systems and for preparing national poverty reduction strategies. The Government of China offered technical guidance and briefing on best practices for poverty reduction to Government representatives from Africa and Asia.

40. Similar bilateral or multilateral governmental exchanges occurred among various countries. For example, UNICEF supported visits of officials from Burkina Faso to a sanitation conference in South Africa and study tours from Ghana to Ethiopia and Bangladesh to observe community-led total sanitation. UNICEF in Oman and Tunisia supported the participation of journalists in the regional media forum on health promotion and behavioural change and facilitated an exchange between officials from Egypt and Oman on evidence-based decision-making. Delegates from the East Asia and the Pacific region at the second Asia-Pacific Injury Prevention Conference were supported in order to learn from the experience of Viet Nam in building a cooperative programme on injury prevention.

41. In Brazil, UNICEF assisted in the transfer of technical knowledge on HIV/AIDS and antiretroviral therapies to other Latin American countries and Portuguese-speaking nations. UNICEF also hosted study tours to share and learn from experiences from the UNICEF-supported "municipal seal of approval" programme and methods for mobilizing officials at the municipal level to achieve progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

42. UNICEF in India and Nigeria facilitated an exchange of learning between national partners and collaboration on developing decentralized programming for polio eradication and communication for development. UNICEF in Oman and the Sudan supported civil society partners and religious leaders from these countries in supporting the call to end female genital mutilation/cutting, while UNICEF in Senegal facilitated the exchange of ideas and experience among West African countries for developing a coordinated subregional strategy for ending female genital mutilation/cutting.

43. In some cases, exchange of experience took place through youth and adolescent participation. UNICEF supported the participation of adolescents aged 14 to 18 years at the Rome Junior 8 Summit in July 2009. These participants from 14 countries representing the Group of Eight (G-8) countries and the six other

invited nations held dialogues with the G-8 leadership and the ombudspersons for children from the G-8 countries on various issues concerning children, including climate change, child rights in the context of the financial crisis, and development in Africa. The adolescent participants committed to following up, upon their return, on the recommendations they made to their respective countries. In a further example, UNICEF supported child participation activities with the African Union as part of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union and the implementation of the African Union call for accelerated action towards an Africa fit for children.

44. Overall, with impetus from the triennial comprehensive policy review, UNICEF support to South-South cooperation as part of country cooperation, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and regional initiatives is being approached more systematically. Greater use is being made of knowledge-management tools to identify good examples, promising modalities and opportunities to support and facilitate South-South cooperation in critical areas of child rights. UNICEF will also rapidly broaden its collaboration with other United Nations organizations in this area at all levels.

C. Gender equality and women's empowerment

45. UNICEF enhanced gender mainstreaming in the organization in 2009. The recommendations of the 2008 evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF were taken forward through the management response and supported by the Executive Board in decision 2009/3, adopted at the 2009 first regular session. The recommendations led to the development of a one-year organization-wide action plan for implementation at all levels, supported by a $4.25 million allocation by the Office of the Executive Director. A senior adviser was appointed to coordinate the organizational response to the evaluation.

46. The management response identified several priority areas of action: policy, strategy, accountability, staffing and gender expertise, capacity-building and training, development programming, financing gender mainstreaming, United Nations coherence, and engagement with partners. In February 2009, UNICEF formed an interdivisional gender task force, comprising senior managers at headquarters and in all regions and headed by the Director of Policy and Practice. The task force monitors the progress on implementing the action plan.

47. Gender assessments and reviews of country programmes, required in all programme cycles, are taking place at an increased rate and were further supported by the executive directive on gender equality of March 2009. These reviews have driven the development of capacity-building initiatives, which are contributing to strengthening the skills of staff to assess, analyse and programme for gender equality.

48. Other initiatives are taking place at the regional level, including in capacity-building in gender. The Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States region launched a regional gender facility in order to support country offices in their gender reviews. The South Asia region has designed a set of streamlined gender assessment tools based on the reviews and capacity-building exercises conducted in Nepal and Pakistan.

49. The 2008 evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF also highlighted the need for improved performance in humanitarian operations. The recommendations included a call for strengthened programme design and emergency field staff capacity in order to ensure that humanitarian action benefited girls, boys, women and men. In 2008, UNICEF launched a pilot initiative in a number of countries to implement sector-specific gender equality interventions in humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery programmes. In February 2009, UNICEF held a global consultation on gender equality in humanitarian action to review and share lessons learned from the pilot, which will inform broader organizational policy and programme development. A new gender in emergencies policy specialist position was filled in July 2009.

50. A number of organization wide initiatives took place as part of the 2009 action plan. As recommended by the evaluation, the 1994 gender policy has been updated through a wide consultative process involving staff, United Nations and civil society partners and UNICEF Executive Board members. The revised gender policy specifically addresses the question of developing effective accountability mechanisms, both at field and headquarters levels. Operational guidance notes on gender mainstreaming are being developed for each medium-term strategic plan focus area. A "community of practice" dedicated to gender is being established in collaboration with UNDP. Other initiatives include the production of a report on engaging boys and men in promoting gender equality and a consultation process for the development of a coherent strategy in the field of gender-based violence.

51. Training and learning is a crucial component of gender policy implementation. A common introductory e-learning course on gender for staff, produced jointly with UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), will be launched early in 2010, while a UNICEF-UNFPA learning package on linkages between the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is being finalized. UNICEF continues to work together with UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM to promote joint United Nations country team reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women pre-sessional working group sessions, at the Committee's request. As part of UNICEF-UNFPA collaboration on linking the two Conventions in the work of the two organizations, an advocacy booklet on "Integrating children's and women's rights through the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" has been developed to promote action at the national level. A study on reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been finalized. The study will be presented in December 2009 at an event commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention and will be launched as a publication in 2010 in connection with the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing.

52. A gender equality component has been integrated into the curriculum of senior- and mid-level training courses. The Division of Human Resources is developing a database of gender experts as well as generic job descriptions for gender specialists. The revised competency framework has included gender equality in its updated format. In terms of budgeting, a gender marker is being developed to track gender-related expenditures in the long term.

53. UNICEF continued to play a strong role in inter-agency cooperation, further strengthening its collaboration with UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNDP in particular. Together with UNIFEM, UNICEF is leading an action learning process on joint programming for the United Nations Development Group Task Force on Gender Equality. This process is aimed at supporting and evaluating joint programming efforts for the promotion of gender equality in three self-selected pilot countries: Albania, Morocco and Nepal. UNICEF has also worked closely with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women on the Secretary-General's 2008-2015 campaign to end violence against women and has contributed to the development of the regional components of the campaign, especially in Africa. UNICEF continues to contribute to the Working Group on Gender Architecture established to provide input to the President of the General Assembly on changes to the United Nations gender equality architecture. UNICEF co-chairs with UNFPA a working group on adolescent girls. UNICEF is also working closely with the World Bank, WHO and UNFPA on accelerating efforts to improve maternal and newborn health.

54. A UNICEF global consultation on gender equality will be held in early 2010 to take stock of cross-regional experiences and progress realized in the context of the 2009 action plan and the development in particular of a medium-term strategy and plan of action. Building on the momentum gained in 2009, this consultation will provide the basis for future transformative efforts at all levels of UNICEF to achieve and sustain excellence in this area. A web-based survey was conducted on gender mainstreaming in UNICEF to assess knowledge, competencies and skills among staff. The survey will be used as a baseline to assess progress in 2010 and beyond in the efforts to improve organizational performance in gender mainstreaming.

55. All priority areas of action identified in the management response to the gender evaluation have been addressed through these initiatives and strategies, which will continue in 2010 and beyond.

D. Transition from relief to development

56. The engagement of UNICEF in supporting the transition from relief to development continues to intensify and expand. The enhanced recovery and risk reduction capacity in the Office of Emergency Programmes positioned UNICEF to not only engage with but also influence United Nations interdepartmental and multilateral forums dealing with post-crisis transition, integrated presences, peacebuilding, natural disaster recovery and disaster risk reduction. UNICEF also advanced efforts to develop policies and guidance for field support.

57. The imperative of post-crisis, and in particular post-conflict, situations received renewed attention. In his report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (A/63/881–S/2009/304), the Secretary-General sought to reorient and revitalize the international community's agenda for supporting national efforts to secure sustainable peace more rapidly and effectively, including in the areas of coordination, civilian deployment capabilities and financing.

58. The strengthened position of UNICEF in global peacebuilding was timely. Intensively involved in the drafting of the Secretary-General's report, UNICEF has supported the ongoing implementation of its recommendations. UNICEF was invited by the Peacebuilding Support Office to join its Senior Policy Group on

Peacebuilding, which advises the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and oversees implementation of the recommendations presented in the Secretary-General's report. UNICEF enhanced its overall collaboration with the Peacebuilding Support Office, including through the continued secondment of a staff member. UNICEF served on the inter-agency task force for the development of guidelines for the restructured Peacebuilding Fund and supported country applications to the new Fund.

59. UNICEF also helped to shape global policy and planning for integrated presences and engaged a range of country support mechanisms. UNICEF participated in the integration steering committee and integrated mission planning process, where it co-chaired the sub-working group on training. UNICEF also participated in the increasingly important integrated mission task forces, which provide standing, coordinated inter-agency and interdepartmental headquarters support to integrated presences, and participated in a technical assessment mission and an integrated strategic framework support mission. UNICEF is issuing internal guidance on integrated presences.

60. The need for adequate, predictable, flexible and expedient financing modalities for transition continued to be an important focus. UNICEF advanced its commitment to the United Nations-World Bank partnership framework for crisis and post-crisis situations, providing guidance to the field on implementing the partnership framework and fiduciary principles accord. UNICEF also remained engaged in global multilateral discussions on pooled funding.

61. UNICEF continues its role as a member of the joint United Nations Development Group and Executive Committee on Humanitarian Assistance Working Group on Transition Issues and the United Nations Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action.

62. At the country level, UNICEF supported major relief efforts, was an active partner in integrated presences and fully participated in post-crisis needs assessments and joint assessment missions, taking the lead as necessary on social sectors and child protection. UNICEF supported early recovery through its cluster leadership and in coordination with the early recovery cluster. UNICEF continues to participate in the global Inter-Agency Standing Committee Cluster Working Group for Early Recovery, and is now a roster member.

63. UNICEF has also made strides in disaster risk reduction, engaging inter-agency coordination, policy and guidance development and providing field support to several countries and regions. UNICEF played an important role in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee task force on climate change and co-chaired the Inter-Agency Standing Committee sub-working group on preparedness. UNICEF has led efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction within the cluster on water, sanitation and hygiene education and continues to support the roll-out of disaster risk reduction guidance for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

64. UNICEF recognizes the inherent relationship between climate change and disaster risk reduction. UNICEF crafted a multipronged strategy for the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which emphasized the need for adaptation and disaster risk reduction in creating resilient communities for children.

65. The role of UNICEF in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction remains central. Strong participation in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction contributed to an explicit commitment by International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system partners to reduce the growing risk that disasters pose to education and health services and facilities. UNICEF also supports the International Strategy's thematic platform on knowledge and education and continues to work with its partners to advance child-focused disaster risk reduction.

66. At the country level, UNICEF has expanded its work to reduce disaster impacts on education, to build national capacity in preparedness, response and recovery and to pilot work at the subnational level in vulnerability and capacity assessment.

67. The revision of the UNICEF core commitments for children in emergencies represents a major step towards systematically addressing early recovery and post-crisis disaster risk reduction from the outset of humanitarian response. The revision aims at strengthening national ownership of the post-crisis response, including the promotion of participatory approaches and the direct involvement of communities and children; determining national capacity-building requirements for scaling up and sustaining post-crisis response and outcomes; ensuring UNICEF participation in post-crisis and post-disaster needs assessments to determine damage and losses and the needs of the population; and establishing sequenced priorities, actions and results for recovery response.

68. Strengthening capacity development for humanitarian action through a human rights-based approach is a priority of the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013; however, there is little policy and practical guidance for strengthening the capacity of national structures to prepare for and deliver relief assistance. Therefore, any capacities developed tend to be incidental results rather than deliberate efforts rooted in clear strategies and gap analysis.

69. UNICEF is developing guidance for national capacity development to complement the revised core commitments for children in emergencies. This will enable UNICEF offices to better programme for capacity development with national partners and to strengthen future response, while allowing resources to be used more effectively.

IV. Improved functioning of the United Nations development system

70. In 2009, significant progress was made in further improving the functioning of the United Nations development system. The United Nations Development Group developed and approved a detailed implementation plan for the management and accountability framework for the United Nations development system and resident coordinator system, including the so-called "functional firewall" for the system. Some progress has also been achieved in the areas of simplification and harmonization of business processes, joint programming and roll-out of a new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

A. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities

71. UNICEF has strongly supported implementation of the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review. In 2008, UNICEF developed a triennial comprehensive policy review action plan with 90 action points. As at September 2009, 96 per cent of the 90 action points were completed, under way or continual (implementation expected to continue beyond a set time frame); only 4 per cent were yet to be initiated. Of the action points on which progress had been made, 56 were completed or continual. The 34 that were under way had time-bound deliverables and were expected to be completed by the end of 2009 or during 2010. Key areas requiring further work were aid effectiveness (including indicators), implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (with full implementation expected in 2012), harmonization of financial rules and regulations and common services.

72. To advance the implementation of the triennial comprehensive policy review and further strengthen the resident coordinator system, the United Nations Development Group Advisory Group (chaired in 2008-2009 by UNICEF) developed the management and accountability system of the United Nations development and resident coordinator system and its implementation plan. UNICEF, as the chair of the United Nations Development Group Working Group on Resident Coordinator System Issues, together with its sister organizations, is working in 2009 to communicate and implement this package of agreements clarifying accountabilities and relationships among resident coordinators, United Nations country teams and the country representatives of individual United Nations organizations. The aim is a stronger and more empowered resident coordinator who, with support from the country team, will lift United Nations engagement to a higher level based on the excellence of the country team members. These changes are embodied in the new resident coordinator job description, guidelines on resident coordinator/country team relations (or code of conduct) and the United Nations country team dispute resolution mechanism, all of which were disseminated in 2008 and early 2009. UNICEF, along with all participating United Nations organizations, has revised its job descriptions for country representatives to reflect these changes in accountability.

73. Also in 2009, UNICEF developed a table of accountabilities and a communications strategy to ensure that all staff are engaged in the changes noted above. UNICEF has held several discussions with its field staff on the management and accountability system, including an interactive dialogue with UNICEF representatives, regional directors and directors of headquarters divisions. Building on this meeting, UNICEF held its third internal United Nations coherence stocktaking meeting, which included 51 staff from the eight "Delivering as one" pilot countries (including five resident coordinators who had worked previously for UNICEF) and other countries working intensively to increase coherence and roll out United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in 2009-2010. Participants discussed the monitoring and evaluation system, reviewed progress in implementing business processes, shared lessons from the pilot countries and discussed the latest developments in United Nations coherence, including United Nations Development Assistance Framework roll-out and support. The recommendations from these meetings are integrated into the UNICEF action plan.

74. The six teams of regional directors of the United Nations system play a key role in increasing United Nations coherence. UNICEF fully participates in each team, which meets four times a year on average. The teams have provided strategic leadership, policy guidance and coherent technical support to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams. They have also offered quality assurance for more than 30 United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks through peer support groups, managed staff performance through over 100 resident coordinator appraisals and assisted in the resolution of problems in specific countries, where appropriate. UNICEF participated in the 2009 functional analysis to see how best to support the teams in these key tasks. The teams expanded in 2009 to reflect the spectrum of United Nations organizations that play a role in each region.

75. Several joint programmes have progressed to become more formal arrangements, with joint planning, implementation and budgets. Some have become full "one programmes" and "one funds" in "Delivering as one" pilot countries. UNICEF continues to support and participate in results-based joint programmes that enhance the capacity of national partners. In 2008, UNICEF country offices reported participating in 187 joint programmes, 55 per cent more than the 121 joint programmes in 2007. This increase indicates that close collaboration is being embraced by UNICEF. Parallel fund management remained the funding mechanism used most widely (53 per cent), followed by pooled fund management (20 per cent).

76. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework supports a framework of action through which the United Nations system can support national priorities, using clear indicators to measure results. UNICEF is working with other United Nations organizations to simplify the Development Assistance Framework guidelines and process to ensure that the Framework is strategic and flexible, as well as adaptable to specific country needs. The new guidelines will ensure that the Development Assistance Framework process revolves around national cycles, systems and priorities. In addition, UNICEF collaborated with other United Nations organizations on common formats for reports to Governments, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2009. UNICEF also chairs and participates in regional quality support and assurance peer support groups.

77. In 2008, 41 UNICEF country offices reported sharing common premises with other United Nations organizations, and to date there are more than 60 officially designated United Nations Houses worldwide. UNICEF offices have identified security as the main challenge related to establishing and maintaining common premises.

78. UNICEF offices reported that 101 country offices share at least one type of common service with other United Nations organizations, particularly in areas of essential services such as security, banking and pouch. Differing agency procedures are cited as the key challenge in that area. UNICEF country offices are making progress, but more needs to be done to harmonize procedures and business practices among United Nations organizations.

79. During the year, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF further harmonized the functions, management results and indicators as a part of the biennial support budget for 2010-2011 (E/ICEF/2009/AB/L.4), which was presented to the UNICEF Executive Board at its 2009 second regular session in September. Collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA has continued, with further harmonization in cost classification. Improvements have also been made in performance indicators, baselines and targets

to ensure more strategic linkages between the results and key indicators. In addition, each function now contains at least one result common to all three organizations. This feature increases transparency and facilitates review by intergovernmental bodies and comparison among the three organizations.

B. Simplification and harmonization of business practices

80. Simplification and harmonization of business processes has been called for by both United Nations staff at the country level and Member States.

81. In this regard, UNICEF made progress on its organizational improvement initiatives. Some examples of progress since 2008 include an improved programme and resource allocation structure, the development of the UNICEF accountability system (see E/ICEF/2009/15), and knowledge management and information-sharing tools in areas such as supply, social policy and education.

82. The introduction of a new one enterprise resource planning system called VISION (Virtual Integrated System of Information) will bring together fund management, programme reporting and performance management, transforming the way UNICEF does business. UNICEF is consulting with other United Nations organizations, including UNDP, UNFPA and WFP, to ensure that its systems will support United Nations inter-agency coherence efforts.

83. In 2009, inter-agency working groups also made key advances in the simplification and harmonization of business practices. The groups developed new guidelines on common procurement (using local teams and systems), guidance on funding for common premises, and common information and communication technologies platforms, which were piloted in Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania.

84. UNICEF strongly supports the harmonized approach to cash transfers, which is a response to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, to strengthen national capacity to manage resources, manage risks and reduce transaction costs for Governments and the United Nations. As at June 2009, 19 countries (14 per cent of the countries involved) were fully implementing the harmonized approach to cash transfers. In addition, 33 per cent had completed micro-assessments, 63 per cent had completed macro-assessments and 57 per cent had completed audit plans. Following a review of progress in 2009, it was agreed to move the harmonized approach to cash transfers forward by several means: increasing the focus on capacity development for better accounting processes, encouraging the undertaking of more common audits and reviewing implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers in middle-income and net-contributing countries, with a view to identifying good practices. UNICEF takes part in training and evaluations and participates in regional- and country-level groups on the harmonized approach to cash transfers.

C. Delivering as one

85. The eight "Delivering as one" pilot countries have progressed in different areas, as illustrated in each of their stocktaking reports and in the "Delivering as one: 2008 stocktaking synthesis report", issued in 2009 (see www.undg.org). Pilot

countries and other countries implementing United Nations coherence demonstrated increased levels of national ownership and leadership. Joint programming, when aligned with the programming cycle, enabled greater responsiveness to national priorities. In addition, a more coherent United Nations team led to improved communication and clearer roles and responsibilities delineated among the United Nations system, Governments, donors and other stakeholders. UNICEF, together with FAO, co-chaired an inter-agency task team to review change management and capacity assessment in the pilots and recommended ways to move forward.

86. In 2009, UNICEF continued to provide the pilot countries with resources and the means to verify the positive benefits of delivering as one. The UNICEF-United Nations coherence stocktaking meeting in May 2009 encouraged greater adoption of several measures: peer support, the sharing of experiences, and brainstorming activities among pilot countries, increased-coherence countries and United Nations Development Assistance Framework roll-out countries.

87. UNICEF allocated $2 million during 2008-2009 to the regional offices to provide targeted United Nations coherence support to field offices.

88. UNICEF has implemented several tools to support United Nations coherence. These include ASK (Achieving Strategic Knowledge), an online tool staffed by a team of experts who respond to questions and issues raised by field offices on inter-agency cooperation and United Nations coherence. Queries and their responses are captured in an online database for use by UNICEF staff. In 2009, ASK handled more than 130 substantive queries, 60 per cent of them from pilot countries. The majority of queries involved budgetary issues, followed by business processes and programmatic issues.

89. UNICEF also produces regular newsletters highlighting the latest developments in United Nations coherence for headquarters, country and regional staff, and created a United Nations coherence wiki website showcasing stories and lessons learned.

90. Members of the United Nations Development Group Advisory Group, including UNICEF, are making individual and joint visits to the pilot countries. In 2009, UNICEF visited three: Albania, Uruguay and Viet Nam. The United Republic of Tanzania hosted a visit by a deputy executive director, a number of visits regarding common procurement and a follow-up visit on change management. Other pilot countries have also been supported on common procurement, common premises and the establishment of United Nations Houses.

D. Harmonization of financial rules and multi-donor trust funds

91. In 2008, UNICEF, along with UNDP, UNFPA and WFP, developed a harmonized set of financial rules and regulations. These will be adopted following final review by the comptrollers. Marked advances in management of multi-donor trust funds were made in 2009. UNICEF helped to develop common standard administrative arrangements, memorandums of understanding and, by the end of 2009, common guidelines on the creation and management of multi-donor trust funds.

92. Building on the experience of the "one United Nations funding window" in the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, a new multi-donor fund was

created to support the United Nations in delivering as one (the "expanded 'Delivering as one' funding window"). As of 2009, donors included the Governments of Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. UNICEF chaired the steering committee. The fund allocated more than $81 million to "Delivering as one" pilot countries, the enhanced coherence "self-starters" and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework roll-out countries. UNICEF provided guidance to recipient countries. The fund supports United Nations teams that have developed integrated programmes, plans and budgets. UNICEF, along with sister organizations, also provided guidance to United Nations country teams on pooled funds, terms of reference and memorandums of understanding.

V. Evaluation of operational activities

93. The 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review emphasized that programme countries should have greater ownership and leadership in the evaluation of all forms of assistance and requested United Nations system organizations to pursue and intensify efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities. Capacity development initiatives on evaluation are covered in section III.A of the present report. The triennial comprehensive policy review also called for closer linkages between evaluation and knowledge management.

94. UNICEF promotes the use of evaluation as an instrument for improving the effectiveness, efficiency and overall impact of investments for children and the linking of evaluation to performance in achievement of development goals. Working closely with the United Nations Evaluation Group, national capacity development in evaluation is pursued as a collective United Nations-wide responsibility, where possible with multilateral banks and bilateral partners at the country level.

95. The medium-term strategic plan stresses the role of evaluation as a means for evidence-based action for children, advancing the culture of learning within the organization and promoting knowledge as a key component of UNICEF contributions to the Millennium Development Goals. In January 2008, the Executive Board approved a new evaluation policy, which marked a milestone for strengthening the evaluation function in the organization. The policy endorses the decentralized nature of the evaluation function and sets out clear accountabilities for evaluation at the country, regional and headquarters levels. It also emphasizes UNICEF's role as a field-based organization in strengthening national capacity development in evaluation.

96. The UNICEF Evaluation Office assumed the role of co-chair of the United Nations Evaluation Group on a country-led evaluation of the role and contribution of the United Nations system in South Africa. South African national partners exercised strong ownership and leadership of the joint evaluation.

97. The process of conducting evaluations can make a strong contribution to national capacity development, an important goal underlying the UNICEF approach to evaluation at all levels. To ensure wider ownership, Governments and other key stakeholders are involved from the planning stage, and national consultants and institutions are engaged as part of evaluation teams.

98. Many challenges remain in promoting an evaluation culture and ensuring adequate evaluation capacity in programme countries. Despite considerable investment in training and the establishment of networks, many countries face shortages of qualified professionals and resources for evaluation. UNICEF will continue to support progress and address challenges encountered through advocacy and collaboration with a variety of partners, through initiatives led by the United Nations Evaluation Group and through its own country-level action, channelling efforts and resources to regions and countries where the needs are greatest.